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Nelson, William

William Burnet, governor of New York and New Jersey, 1720-1728; a sketch of his administration in New York.

New York, 1894.

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GOVERNOR OF NEW-YORK AND NEW JERSEY

1720-1728

A SKETCH OF HIS ADMINISTRATION IN NEW-YORK

BY

WILLIAM NELSON

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VIEW OF NEW-YORK IN GOVERNOR BURNET'S TIME.

CHAPTER V

THE ADMINISTRATION OF WILLIAM BURNET
1720–1728

IF the people of New-York had ever been accustomed to be consulted in the selection of their chief magistrates, it would have provoked them to learn that the proud position of governor of their great province was largely a matter of private barter and arrangement between individuals. Governor Hunter was suffering the tortures of sciatica, and despaired of improving in America.[1] William Burnet had been lightened in purse by his ventures in the South Sea scheme,[2] and wished to replenish his fortunes. The two were warm personal friends. So Hunter agreed to exchange his office of governor for Burnet's less lucrative but more convenient position of comptroller-general of the customs in Great Britain, with a salary of £1,200 per year.[3] Both had sufficient influence at court to secure the ratification of their bargain by the king, and presto! it was done. As an impartial historian remarks: "It unfortunately happened for our American provinces at the time we now treat of, that a government in any of our colonies in those parts was scarcely looked upon in any other light

[1] "I have no hope of Ease on this Side, having try'd all remedys, Christian and Pagan, Palenical, Chymical and Whimsical, to no purpose. Aix-la-Chappelle is all my present Comfort." Hunter to Secretary Popple, New Jersey Archives, 4: 387.

[2] Wynne's "British Empire" (London, 1770), 1: 181; "History of the United States," by James Grahame (Boston, 1845), 3: 99; Smith's "History of New-York" (London, 1776), p. 201.

[3] Smith's "History New-York," p. 201; Douglass's "Summary" (London, 1755), 1: 480; Wynne, 1: 191. New-York paid her governor £1,200 sterling, and New Jersey paid £500 or £600; the perquisites were considerable in both provinces.

than that of an hospital, where the favorites of the ministry might lie till they had recovered their broken fortunes; and oftentimes they served as asylums from their creditors."[1] But it is not too much to say that no American colony had as yet been favored with so excellent an appointment as this of William Burnet to be "Captain General and Governor in Chief of the Provinces of New-York, New Jersey and Territories thereon depending in America, and Vice Admiral of the same." The people were favorably disposed toward him, for it was only five years since the decease of his father, the eminent Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury from 1689 to 1715, and they still cherished warmly the memory of the distinguished prelate and statesman who had been so influential in seating William and Mary on the throne of England, and thereby securing to Great Britain a succession of Protestant rulers. The new governor was himself named after the great Prince of Orange, having been born at The Hague in March, 1688, his namesake being the sponsor at his baptism.[2] His early education was supervised by his father and the celebrated philosopher, Sir Isaac Newton, and he also had the advantage of meeting, both at home and abroad, the most eminent men of learning and the principal statesmen and courtiers of the age, and still he confessed that he was nearly twenty years old before his father discovered any promise of intellectual development in him.[3] Although but thirty-two years of age, the young governor was a widower, with a bright little boy of five or six years, named Gilbert, whom he brought with him to America.[4] The king made the appointment April 19, 1720; the instructions were prepared May 4, and submitted to the king May 31;[5] and after various delays Burnet sailed from Portsmouth about July 10, arriving at New-York on September 16. His commission was published the next day, with the usual popular demonstrations.[6] He speedily discovered that the party which had always opposed Governor Hunter had made headway in the interregnum,

1 Wynne, 1 : 191.

2 "New-York Genealogical and Biographical Record," 6 : 6.

3 Whitehead's "Perth Amboy," p. 156.

4 "New England Historical Genealogical Register," 5: 49; N. J. Archives, 5: 261. His first wife was a daughter of the Rev. Dr. George Stanhope, Dean of Canterbury. "Heraldic Journal," April, 1866, p. 61.

5 Dr. Colden, forty years later, told a curious story about a clerk of the Board of Trade interpolating a word in the instructions. ("New-York Historical Society Collections," 1876. pp. 133, 136, 203; "Documents relating to Colonial History of New-York," 5 : 476, 499). But the story was incorrect. Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 485.

6 Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 536–8, 572, 573; N. J. Archives, 5 : 3; 11: 52–4.

and as a shrewd stroke of policy he decided to summon the old assembly again, instead of ordering a new election. This course was contrary to the custom in such cases, and George Clarke, the secretary of the province, at the same time deputy auditor for Horace Walpole, advised against it.[1] However, his course seemed to be vindicated, for when the legislature met in the old Fort George at the Battery on October 13, 1720, he addressed them in a speech admirable in tone, and they promptly responded with an appropriation for "an ample and honorable support for His Majesty's Government for five years," and promised "to make up any deficiencies that by unforeseen accidents might happen to it," and they added this handsome compliment: "We believe that the son of that worthy Prelate, so Eminently Instrumental under our glorious Monarch, William the third, in delivering us from Arbitrary Power, and its concomitants Popery, Superstition and Slavery, has been Educated in and possesses those Principles that so Justly recommended his Father to the Councils and Confidence of Protestant Princes and succeeds our former Governour, not only in Power, but Inclinations to do us good."[2]

The governor urged upon the legislature the importance of resisting the inroads of the French upon the frontiers, of repairing the forts, and putting the militia in the best condition for service. In response they made an appropriation to enable him to repair the fortifications and build new ones, and to provide the ways and means therefor they passed another act levying a duty of two per cent. on all European goods imported into the province, which, as might have been expected, was disallowed by the king. But the most important measure of the session for far-reaching consequences was an act prohibiting the sale of Indian goods to the French.[3] For a century and a half the French had been pushing their religious and commercial influence among the Indians west of Quebec to the Mississippi River, undeterred by any obstacles and allowing nothing to interfere with

[1] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 572, 573, 765; N. Y. Hist. Soc. Collections, 1868, p. 207. George Clarke, an English lawyer, had come to New-York in July, 1703, with a commission as secretary of the province. He was appointed a member of the council in 1715, and sworn in May 30, 1716. (Council Minutes, 11: 352). Horace Walpole having been appointed auditor of the province, in 1718 appointed Clarke his deputy (Ib., 503), who in consequence tried to control the revenues, the object apparently being merely to exact a tribute of five per cent. commission on all the moneys raised. The assembly objected to this, and directed the treasurer to account only to the governor and council and assembly. It is evident that there was considerable friction between the governor and Clarke from the outset. (Cal. N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 464, 475.) Clarke was in constant correspondence with Horace Walpole, brother of Sir Robert Walpole, England's great prime minister for so many years. Burnet seems to have relied on the friendship of the Duke of Newcastle, a rival of Sir Robert. (Coxe's "Memoires of Sir Robert Walpole"; Mahon's "History of England," Vol. II.) Thus the internal affairs of the province of New-York were closely intertwined with the intrigues of the ministers at home. When the Duke of Newcastle succeeded in driving Walpole to France and Carteret to Ireland, and assumed the State Office himself, Burnet became judiciously friendly to Clarke, and helped him to secure £2500 commissions on the current revenues of the province and arrears. Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 765.

[2] Journal Legislative Council, 1: 451–3. Smith (p. 202) says that the assembly's address was drawn up by Chief Justice Lewis Morris.

[3] Journal Legislative Council, as cited; Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 577, 703.

their steady purpose of acquiring control over the savages. French traders came regularly to New-York and bought the bulk of the Indian supplies imported from England—strouds[1] and duffels principally—and carried them to Quebec and thence disposed of them to the Indians, who had been accustomed for generations to look upon Quebec as the principal mart for such goods. In this way the French ascendancy over the Indians was greatly and continually extended. Governor Burnet, with a far-seeing eye, perceived this, and, having the glory of England in view, secured the passage of this act by the legislature, whereby it was absolutely forbidden to sell any such goods to the French upon any terms, under a penalty of the forfeiture of the goods sold and a fine of one hundred pounds. Suspected persons could be put upon oath as to whether or not they had violated the law, and compelled to answer under pain of heavy fines or imprisonment. This was the weak feature of the law, being contrary to all English principles of justice, which did not suffer a man to be forced to criminate himself. There was another aspect of the subject. Under the old system, the trade in Indian goods at New-York was engrossed by a few; by this course he caused it to pass into the hands of many. Furthermore, the Indians became more dependent on the English than formerly. Prior to this it had been usual for nine hundred pieces of "strouds" to be carried in one year from Albany to Montreal,[2] where they had sold at a little over thirteen pounds a piece. After the act, pieces sold at Albany for ten pounds, while the price at Montreal had gone up to twenty-five pounds.[3] No wonder the governor was proud of his great success with this first session of the legislature under his administration.

He was equally successful in New Jersey, where he secured an act providing a five years' support for his government. In thanking the New Jersey legislature, he said in his frank and manly way: "I cannot but acknowledge in the most particular manner the acts for the chearful and honourable support and for the security of his Majesty's Government in this Province. I cannot but say that I look upon the latter as the noblest of the two; as I think honour is always more than riches."[4] The New-York assembly had been unanimous in supporting the governor, but Peter Schuyler (the president of the council), Adolph Philipse, and five others were strenuous for a new assembly, which, after a hot debate, the governor declined to order, and threatened the exposure of Schuyler and Philipse for having violated the king's instructions,[5] whereupon Schuyler and four others asked and were given leave to return to their homes. But the governor immediately wrote

[1] "Strouds.—a woollen manufacture established at Stroud, England." Wynne, 1 : 198.

[2] Douglass, 2 : 258.

[3] Smith's "New Jersey," p. 213.

[4] Smith's "New Jersey," p. 417.

[5] President Schuyler had allowed Philipse to have the custody of the provincial seal. N. Y. Hist. Soc. Collections, 1868, p. 206.

to England, urging that Schuyler and Philipse be removed from the council, and asking that Cadwallader Colden and James Alexander be appointed in their stead, which changes were subsequently (1722) made, in accordance with his request.[1] He also recommended the appointment of Philip Livingston as secretary for Indian affairs, in the place of his father, Robert Livingston, who by reason of his advanced years desired to have this change made. Robert Livingston was speaker of the assembly, and had been of great help in the session just closed, which was another reason why Burnet wished to accede to his request. This also was done.[2] In Dr. Colden and James Alexander he secured two of the ablest men in the province for supporters of his administration, and at the same time relieved the council of two of the most influential of the disaffected party.

G Burnet

The legislature had adjourned till March; but when that time came around the governor was otherwise occupied, and he adjourned them again till May 19. How he was engaged appears by a letter of Isaac Bobin under date of March 11, 1721: "There is great talk of His Excellency and Miss Mary Van Horne, the eldest daughter of Abraham Van Horne;"[3] and on May 17, he writes that there were "great preparations for the match so much talked of."[4] The wedding took place shortly after, and undoubtedly was a brilliant affair. Anna Maria Van Horne, the bride, was a beautiful girl of nineteen, having been baptized January 28, 1702. She was the oldest child of Abraham Van Horne and Mary Provoost (daughter of David Provoost). Mr. Van Horne was one of the wealthiest merchants of New-York, and lived in Wall street, where he had a storehouse and a bolting- and baking-house. He was a representative of the old Dutch stock, and had difficulties with the English language all his life, which, however, troubled others more than himself.[5] Notwithstanding this deficiency, his son-in-law recommended him (June 17, 1722) to a seat in the council, in the place of Abraham De Peyster, then incapacitated, and the sturdy old Dutchman sat there with his ancient friend, Rip Van Dam, until his death in 1741.[6] This alliance brought the governor into connection with many

[1] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 578, 579, 647.
[2] Ib., 580, 647.
[3] N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2 : 459.
[4] Ib., 460.
[5] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 886.
[6] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 6 : 209; N. Y. Gen. and Biog. Record, 6 : 6.

of the oldest families in the province, and ought to have strengthened his position materially, if he had had the policy to avail himself of the opportunity. But policy, beyond an honest desire to serve the interests intrusted to him, he did not possess.

In pursuance of his plan to secure the Indian trade, the governor caused a council to be held at Albany on September 7, 1721, which was more numerously attended by the Indians than any previous assembly of the kind in many years.[1] He spent several days among the Indians before the actual council was held, and by his affable and winning manner secured their good will. At the meeting he urged them in the strongest language to break their connections with the French, and to trade only with the English. The wily Indians were non-committal in their reply on that subject, but concluded with this sly hint: "We are informed that your Excellency is Marryed at New-York, We beg leave to acquaint you, that We are glad of it, and wish you much Joy And as a token of our Rejoycing We present a few Beavers to your Lady for Pin Money, And say withall that it is Customary for a Brother upon his Marryage to invite his Brethren to be Merry and Dance." The governor good-naturedly took the hint and ordered them some barrels of beer, "to be merry withall and dance, which they did according to their Custom and were extreamly well Satisfied."[2] The Indians addressed the governor as "Corlaer," giving him the name of Arent Van Corlaer, the first representative of the whites with whom they had treated before; and as they held him in high esteem, they bestowed the same name as a compliment upon the successive governors of New-York.[3] In the meantime the governor had established a trading-station at Tirondequat, on Lake Ontario, in charge of eight gallant young men under the command of Peter Schuyler, Jr., son of the ex-president of the council, and they sold goods to the Indians for half what the French had formerly charged, whereby the English ascendancy was promoted over their Canadian rivals.[4] The admirable training these young men and their successors and associates received in their hazardous enterprise was of great value to the colonists in after years, when just such experience was needed

1 Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 632.

2 Ib., 640, 642, 666.

3 Ib., 3 : 558. The Indians called the governors of the several provinces by the name given to the first of them with whom they had treated. Thus, as just noted, Arent Van Corlaer gave a name to all succeeding governors of New-York. The governor of Maryland was called by the Indians "Assarigoe," signifying a cutlas, which name was given to Lord Howard in 1684, from the Dutch word "Houwer," a cutlas. (Council Minutes, 12 : 365; Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 670.) (*De Houwer*, a cutter, also a broadsword. *Sewel's English-Dutch Dictionary*, Amsterdam, 1691.) The governor of Pennsylvania was called "Onas," the Indian for feather or pen, a translation of William Penn's name. (Council Minutes, 12 : 368; Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 679.) In 1768 the Indians bestowed upon the governor of New Jersey (William Franklin) the name "Sagorighweyogsta," meaning the "Great Arbiter or Doer of Justice," in recognition of his and his people's justice in putting to death some persons who had murdered Indians in that province. (Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 8 : 117.) On this subject see Sparks's "Washington," 2 : 47, note; "Historical Magazine," December, 1868, p. 316.

4 Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 662.

in their dealings with the hostile French Indians.[1] Burnet persuaded the Indians "to open a broad path and sweep it clean for the far Indians to come through to Albany," and he was extremely gratified when twenty of them came thither in the spring of 1722, and still more so when in the ensuing June eighty, besides women and children, arrived there after a journey of more than a thousand miles.[2] These Indian conferences were quaint and picturesque, as well as important. At first they were attended only by the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas, composing the confederation known as the Five Nations. According to Horatio Hale, this confederation of savages established what is now one of the oldest republics in the world, dating back to a period four hundred years ago, when that most remarkable lawgiver, Hiawatha, brought about the union on the basis on which it has been maintained to this day. The annual election of representatives from the various nations to the council of the confederation still takes place in the manner prescribed by him, and the several delegates still bear the official names by which he designated them before Columbus first saw the shores of the New World.[3] The Tuscaroras having become involved in war with the whites in the Carolinas, where they dwelt, came north in 1714, and were received by the Five Nations, and in the course of time joined the confederation as the Sixth Nation.[4]

MRS. WILLIAM BURNET.

The Indians were never in a hurry, and it was usually some days before they could be induced to settle down to business. Burnet occupied this time in going among them and becoming acquainted with their leaders. The conference being at last opened, Lawrence Claese appeared as interpreter, translating the Indian language into

[1] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 641; Smith's "New-York," p. 219. In that charming work by Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, "Memoirs of an American Lady" (London, 1808), 1 : 76–87, is a graphic description of the toils and dangers of the young Americans who set out on trading expeditions from Albany through the trackless waste.

[2] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 684.

[3] "The Iroquois Book of Rites" (Philadelphia, 1883), pp. 21–39; Morgan's "Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family," p. 151; Heckewelder's "Indian Nations" (edition of 1875), p. 56. It should be noted, however, that in the "Journal of American Folklore," 4 : 295–307, W. M. Beauchamp, in a critical review of the accounts of Hi-a-wat-ha, concludes that he must have lived, if at all, not earlier than A. D. 1600.

[4] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 387, 684.

Dutch, while Robert Livingston, the venerable secretary for Indian affairs, translated from Dutch into English, and vice versa. The savages have always been noted for the poetic and felicitous imagery in which they clothe their ideas. In expressing their wish to be on friendly terms with the whites they said (and we can only guess how much of the poetry has been lost in the translation into Dutch and then into English): "Wee were here before the Christians Came Being the Antient Inhabitants of those parts and when the Christians first came we made a Covenant with them which was but of bark but afterward the English Comeing to have the Government of those Countries we made a Covenant Chain of Silver that the thunder itself could not break it."[1] And again: "When the Christians first came to this Country our Ancestors fastened the ship that brought them behind a Great Mountain with a Chain in order to secure the same which mountain lyes behind the Sinnekees Country, so that the one end of the Chain, being fastened there and the other end at ye Ship, if any body would steal away and molest this ship the chain will jingle & make a noise & alarm all the 5 Nations who are bound to defend this ship."[2] At another conference Governor Burnet hinted at the desirability of brightening the covenant chain, whereupon they declared: "We make it clean to keep the same bright and wrap beaver Skins about it, that it may not rust."[3] "Since a Chain is apt to rust, if it be not oiled or greased we will grease it with Bevers grease or Fatt y^t^ the smell thereof will endure for a whole year."[4] The governor was free in giving the Indians excellent advice — not to spend their money in strong drink, but to lay it out on clothing and other necessaries for their support.[5] But when he asked them to assist him in discovering persons guilty of violating the new law forbidding the sale of Indian goods to the French, they, with a shrewd and amusing affectation of simplicity, replied: "We are peaceable People & inclined to Peace & if we should intermeddle in any such matter, we should but create ourselves a great many enemies & therefore desire to be excused."[6]

By this conference Burnet learned more of their wants, and how they were robbed by the traders at Albany, who took them into their houses and plied them with drink before buying their peltries. So the governor had an act passed by the legislature in 1723 providing for the erection of two large wooden houses for the special accommodation of the Indians, where trade with them was carried on publicly.[7] He also used his personal influence to induce the traders to treat the Indians more fairly, and to sell them goods more reasonably, whereby a great improvement was brought about in the relations between the

1 Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 562.
2 Ib., 667.
3 Ib., 799.
4 Ib., 663.
5 Ib., 663.
6 Ib., 668.
7 Ib., 701; "Journal of Legislative Council," 1: 504, 506, 533.

English and the savages. Nor did he overlook the importance of protecting the whites, and the legislature took measures for the renewal of the stockades about Albany and Schenectady, which had been allowed to fall into decay, and authorized the Albany authorities to build two new block-houses for the better protection of that frontier town.[1] But the governor's statesmanlike plan for securing to the English the absolute control of the Indian trade aroused the opposition of the British manufacturers and the New-York merchants, who had engrossed it to themselves. They feared that the French would secure their supplies from other quarters, and that New-York would lose the profits it had so long enjoyed. So these merchants and their British friends drew up a strong remonstrance, urging the king to disallow the act. They claimed that in consequence of it trade had fallen off in New-York, both in imports and exports; that the supply of beaver-skins was but half what it had been before the passage of the act; that the price had gone up twenty-five per cent.; and that importations into the province had been greatly reduced. These representations being transmitted to Governor Burnet, he laid them before the council, and Dr. Colden and Mr. Alexander were charged with the preparation of a reply, which was adopted by the council. In this able and admirable report they refuted most of the facts alleged, and the arguments adduced by the remonstrants.[2] The lords of trade deemed a compromise advisable. They recommended that the act be disallowed on account of the feature compelling persons to answer under oath, under a penalty of one hundred pounds, whether or not they had violated the law. They approved of the design of the act, and recommended that the governor should be instructed to secure the passage of a new bill, omitting the objectionable feature referred to.[3] It was a great triumph for the governor, and he exulted not a little over it. As the king took no action on the report of the lords of trade, and as the act expired by limitation, the legislature in 1726 passed another act, on the governor's recommendation, he having come to an agreement with the people of Albany on the subject, whereby it was provided that a duty of thirty shillings should be laid on every piece of "strouds" carried to Canada, and one of only fifteen shillings on each piece sent from Albany to Lake Ontario, thus giving the English traders a great advantage over their French competitors, and encouraging the Indians to continue coming to Albany for supplies.[4] So much space has been given to this subject because it was the favorite project of the governor during his administration. It was a great thing for the province; of vast

[1] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 631, 782; Journal of Legislative Council, 1: 470–1.
[2] Smith's "New-York," pp. 207, 221.
[3] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 708, 739, 757, 763.
[4] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 778.

importance to New-York City; and yet to this policy, so successfully carried out, was largely due the ultimate removal of Burnet from this government.

While the handsome young governor was thus enforcing his Indian policy, he was not unmindful of the duties resting upon him in other lines. Of a genial nature, extremely sociable in disposition, he readily entered into the social life of the little town. This centered in Fort George,[1] at the Battery, where the governor lived in state in his mansion; where the King's Chapel stood, which had been built on the ruins of the original Dutch church erected nearly a century before, and whence pealed forth the tones of the bell alike for weddings, for funerals, and for public occasions in general. At special entertainments the governor's charming lady would bring out the silver-and-gilt tea-service presented to his father by the Princess Sophia in recognition of his services in bringing about the Protestant succession.[2] According to the old custom observed since the days of Peter Stuyvesant, he received calls on the 1st of January after his arrival.[3] There was much gaiety in the queer little cosmopolitan town in those days. The members of the legislature frequently gathered at the "Widow Post's" after a day's session, to discuss the public affairs over a glass of wine,[4] and gentlemen would sometimes meet at a friend's house "to hear some good Musick, and to take a Tiff of fresh Lime Punch," or something stronger.[5] Secretary Clarke was one of the few citizens of the town who indulged in the luxury of a spinet, which he bought in September, 1723, just as if a little girl who arrived in his family at the same time could not furnish music enough for his house![6] Mr. Clarke displayed various signs of wealth in those days, for in addition to the spinet and a negro servant he bought his wife blue, purple, and green silk stockings a few months later.[7] Some of the worthy Dutch *vrouws* continued to own a multiplicity of petticoats, after the fashion of their mothers, as chronicled by Diedrich Knickerbocker. In 1730 the widow of Francis Philipse was the proud possessor of a red silver-laid petticoat, a red cloth petti-

1 In 1721 the fort had four regular bastions, faced with stone, and mounted with fifty cannon, but had neither ditch nor outworks. (Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 602.) Repairs were made in 1724, and new apartments fitted up in 1725–6, but in the latter year the roof of the chapel and the barracks were still in a ruinous condition. "Journal Legislative Council," 1 : 489–93, 507, 519, 536, 539.

2 Cadwallader Colden, N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, p. 217.

3 Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2 : 458.

4 Ib., 485.

5 Ib., 486.

6 Ib., 480.

7 Ib., 482. Some of Mr. Clarke's purchases show the cost of living in those days: "38½ gals. molasses, at 2s. per gal.; 3 gals. whale oil, at 4s.; 3 bush. salt, at 3s. 6d.; piece of striped silk muslin, at 5d., 'bought at Mrs. Frank's'; piece brown ozanbrige, 9t. 55 ells, at 18d.: a doz. pd. of chocolate at 22s.; 12 lbs. soap, at 7s. 8d.; 4 bottles lime juice, 11s.; 2 bbls. 'lamb black,' 1s.; 1 pr. silk stockings, 19s.; 6 yds. calico, 1s. 6d.; a pr. of 'Cizors,' 1s.; 12 gals. rum, 4s. per gal.; 2 bbls. stale beer, for workmen, £1 16s. per bbl. 'Retgers says it is extraordinary good beer and y^e racking it off into other Barr^ls would flatten it and make it Drink Dead.'" The chocolate was bought at Dugdale's; it had gone up from 20s., owing to an advance in cocoa; the soap and starch "were bought at one Pelletreau's next to Mr. Jordain's." (N.Y. Col. MSS., 42 : 61, 107, 119, 120.) "I sent by Riche Mr. Hyde's [a relative of Mrs. Clarke] Wigg; the price is 4. 10s.; he'll take it again if not approved at that price." Ib., 120.

coat, a silk quilted petticoat, two black silk quilted petticoats, and a splendid psalm-book with gold clasps and gold chain whereby she hung it upon her arm. About this time, too, window-hangings of camlet, colored harrateen, and other expensive goods came into use in the more pretentious houses; also japanned tea-tables, gold-framed looking-glasses, tall eight-day clocks, and other evidences of increasing wealth. Pewter ware was still more common than china. William Smith had been the first private individual to set up a coach (1704), but at this time there were several of them besides the great state coach of his Excellency the governor.[1] Two-wheeled chaises for one horse were the most common vehicle for riding then and for many years after.[2] On pleasant summer evenings everybody assembled on the front *stoep* and chatted with his neighbors and with passers-by — a charming custom revived of late years in the wonderful and progressive metropolis of the great West. Well-to-do people kept excellent tables laden with great varieties of fish, flesh, fowl, and vegetables. The ordinary beverages were beer, cider, punch, and Madeira.[3] Balls and sleigh-rides were the favorite amusements in the winter; in the summer, boating and driving parties. An advertisement from the "American Weekly Mercury" for March 23, 1727, indicates that goldsmiths flourished in the town:

TOMB OF DAVID PROVOOST, IN JONES'S WOOD.

This is to give Notice to all Gentlemen and others, That a Lottery is to be drawn at *Mr. John Stevens* in *Perth Amboy*, for £501 of Silver and Gold Work, wrought by *Simeon Soumain* of *New-York*, Gold-Smith, all of the newest Fashion. The highest Prize consists of an Eight square Tea-Pot, six Tea-Spoons, Skimmer and Tongues, Valued at £18 3s. 6d. The lowest Prize consists of Twelve Shillings Value. There is 278 Prizes in all, and there is only five Blanks to each Prize. Tickets are given out

[1] Edward Bromhead, who officiated as the governor's coachman for some years, appears to have managed to make a lucrative position out of it, as he acquired a snug little property in the city and in Ulster County. Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2 : 504.

[2] "Valentine's Manual," 1858, pp. 501–11.

[3] Burnaby's "Travels," p. 87.

at Six Shillings York Money, or Seven Shillings Jersey Money for each Ticket, at the House of *Mr. John Stevens* in *Amboy*, at *Mr. Lewis Carrees* in *Allens Town*, at Mr. *Jolines* in *Elizabeth Town*, at *Mr. Cortlands* at *Second River*,[1] by Mr. *Andrew Bradford* in *Philadelphia*, at Mr. *Samuel Clowse* in *Jamaica* on *Long Island*, and by *Simeon Soumain* in the City of *New-York*, at which last Place the Goods so to be drawn for are to be seen. And the said Goods are to be valued and appraised by Mr. *Peter Van Dyke*, and Mr. *Charles Le Reux*, two Gold-Smiths in the City of *New-York*. And said Lottery is to be drawn the 22d day of *May* next, Anno 1727. If said Lottery be full sooner, it will be drawn before the 22d of *May next*.

The people were fond of amusements, as just said, balls and sleighing in winter; in the summer, boating and driving parties. A favorite resort for the latter was the Fresh Water Hill,—adjacent to the present Chatham street, south of Pearl street,—on the summit of which Francis Child kept a public house, with pleasure-gardens attached. The wells of the town afforded such poor water that it was scarcely fit to drink, and strangers were often made ill by it. At the upper end of the present City Hall park was a large body of fresh water, fed by innumerable springs. One of these springs was so abundant, and the quality of the water so superior, that it was in universal demand from all parts of the town for making tea; so a huge pump was placed over it, and men came thither with carts and carried away the water to sell it about town to the good housewives for the brewing of the cup that "cheers but not inebriates." Hence the name, "Tea Water Pump," which lingers in the memory of some of the oldest inhabitants to this day.[2] The outlet from the Fresh Water, or Kalek Hoeck, corrupted into "Colleet," flowed across Chatham street, and was spanned by a bridge, and as it became the recognized custom for a gentleman driving over this bridge with a lady to salute his companion, it was known as the "Kissing Bridge."[3] Races took place in the neighborhood, it being pretty well out of town. Of course, it sometimes happened that parties of young people who went out driving beyond the town got belated on their return, and were obliged to pass the night at some wayside house where there was scanty supply of separate rooms, in which case they "bundled," after the fashion of the time, and not infrequently with results that finally brought that queer practice into disrepute, and which Jacob Vosburgh, in a letter to Governor Burnet in 1723, characterizes, with a feeling excusable under the circumstances, as a "wicked and base custom of those parts."[4] The old Dutch families still kept up the custom of sending out printed invitations to funerals, on sheets about the size of this page. Everybody drank. Rum figured largely in the

[1] Now called Belleville, near Newark, New Jersey.

[2] Valentine's Manual, 1865, pp. 605–12.

[3] Burnaby's "Travels" (ed. 1798), p. 87.

[4] Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 480. Although the custom referred to prevailed among the Dutch of New-York and New Jersey within half a century, the writer has found very few of the old people who were willing to admit that they ever "bundled" in their young days, or that they had ever known anything about the practice.

imports into the province. In 1724 it sold at two shillings and ninepence a gallon. In 1726 Isaac Bobin and George Clarke owed "£13 10 shillings for half a pipe of wine."[1] Of course the governor kept a goodly stock of wines and liquors in the ample cellars of his mansion in the fort; nevertheless, when Governor Spotswood of Virginia came to New-York in his Majesty's ship Enterprize, on his way to attend the Indian conference at Albany in the fall of 1722, he brought his own liquors with him,—whether because he doubted the quantity or the quality of the New-York supply is not known,—and he asked Governor Burnet and his council to admit his liquors free of duty, which of course they did;[2] and, although the record is silent on that head, it is a safe guess that they all sampled the Virginia governor's choice without delay. A different sort of petition came before the same body on May 15, 1724, when Captain Peter Solgard, of his Majesty's ship Greyhound, informed the council that the navy had refused to furnish rations of rum to shipwrights and calkers employed in refitting his Majesty's ships in the plantations, and the men refused to work without it, wherefore he asked leave to impress such as he needed. But the council concluded that such a course would drive the workmen out of the colony, to the great damage of the merchant service, especially as the men employed on merchant vessels were paid six and ninepence per day (ninepence more than in the navy), and were given their usual allowance of rum besides.[3] How the English captain managed to get his vessel refitted does not appear.

Slavery prevailed, with its attendant evils. Labor was scarce, which was the excuse for stealing the natives from their homes in Africa and bringing them to New-York, to be sold like cattle. The price ranged from forty to seventy-five pounds. Thus, in 1720, Captain Hopkins offers a negro for fifty pounds; in 1723 Captain Munroe is willing to sell his "negro wench, 17 years old, warranted sound in limb, a native of Jamaica, for £45." Mr. Chaloner offers a "negro wench for £45, 20 years old, sound of limb," and with the promise of supplying her owner with another human chattel in the course of three months. William Fraser, of Richmond County, is closing up an estate, and offers a negro man and wench for sale, for fifty and sixty pounds respectively. Robert King, of Perth Amboy, offers to sell George Clarke a negro wench for fifty pounds,[4] while Dr. Dupuy wants fifty-five pounds for a negro wench nineteen years old, whom he had brought up from infancy. The poor girl did not like to be sold, he said, but he sent her to Mr. Clarke "on approval," with the caution: "she will pretend not to know anything, but she must not

[1] Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 489, 497.
[2] Council Minutes, 13 : 365.
[3] Council Minutes, 14 : 296.
[4] Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2 : 454, 476, 477–481.

be believed." Three years later Mr. Clarke is anxious to sell a negro woman, "as she has a great itch for running away." So it is probable that the girl could not be tamed into submission. Ex-Sheriff Harrison, of Perth Amboy, wants seventy-five pounds for a negro wench and child four years old.[1] The importations of slaves into New-York were, for the years named: 1720, eighty-one; 1721, one hundred and ninety-three; 1722, one hundred and six; 1723, eighty-two; 1724, sixty-one; 1725, one hundred and thirteen; 1726, one hundred and eighty.[2] The newspapers of the day contain numerous advertisements offering rewards for runaway slaves, who are described as if they were, horses or mules, with all their peculiar "marks." There was a white slavery in those days, too. In 1723 a white woman and her husband, from New England, who had been burnt out by the Indians, offer themselves for hire for a term of years.[3] Dr. John Browne, "in York Road, West Jersey," in 1726 offers forty shillings reward for the return to him of "a servant Woman, named Sarah Parler or Sartin, supposed to be Inveigled or Conveyed away by one Richard Sartin, who served his Time at French Creek in Pennsylvania, at the Iron Works, who pretends that he is her Husband, but is not; she is a little thin Person, having on a Calico Gown strip'd with Blue, or a black and white one of Woole and Worstead, a new Bonet, and other tolerable good Cloaths."[4] In the same year John Leonards, "at South river bridge near Amboy," gleefully announces that a negro had been forced by starvation to come to his house, and he holds him till his owner shall come and pay a reward "and also reasonably for his Diet till fetched."[5] Men and women sold themselves for terms of years for their passage to this country; or when misfortunes befell them here, they sold themselves until they could gather a little money. The negro slave-market in New-York was established in 1709 at the foot of Wall street, where it was in Governor Burnet's time.[6] Many of the planters, with questionable liberality, allowed their slaves one day in the week to work for themselves, on condition of their feeding and clothing themselves! Some

EAST RIVER, BETWEEN JOHN STREET AND PECK SLIP.

1 Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2 : 481, 496.
2 Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 814.
3 Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 481.
4 "American Weekly Mercury" (Philadelphia), August 25, 1726.
5 Ib., July 14, 1726.
6 Valentine's Manual, 1865, p. 559.

allowed all Saturday, some half of Saturday and half of Sunday, and some only Sunday. The negroes were assured that they had no souls, and perished as the beasts.[1] Their punishments were barbarous. They were burnt at the stake, broken on the wheel, or hung alive in chains to endure a lingering, horrible death by slow torture.[2] Their dead were buried in a field set apart for the purpose, on the north side of the present Chambers street, just opposite the new Court House, at night, by their own people, without any Christian offices, but usually with some superstitious rites they had brought from Africa.[3] These weird assemblies by night being calculated to stir up the negroes to acts of violence, in 1722 the city authorities ordained that thereafter negroes and Indian slaves dying within the city, on the south side of the Fresh Water, should be buried by daylight, and before sunset. It was also ordained that any negro or Indian, slave or free, convicted of gaming or playing in the streets or elsewhere for money, should be publicly whipped at the whipping-post, unless the master or owner of any such slave should pay a fine of three shillings.[4] The whipping-post, pillory, and stocks stood in Broad street, a little below the City Hall, which was on Wall street, where the United States Subtreasury now stands; the jail was in the basement of the City Hall; by 1724 it had become so unfit for the purpose that the judges complained of it; in 1727 it was presented by the grand jury, in consequence of which four men were appointed to watch it to prevent escapes.[5] In July, 1727, it was ordered that a public gallows be erected on the Common, at the usual place of execution—at the upper end of the present City Hall park. In 1720 it was ordained that no brickmakers or charcoal-burners should cut down any trees upon the commons for burning bricks or making charcoal.[6] There was no poorhouse, the poor being cared for at their homes, by private charity or by the vestry. Every person relieved wore a badge of blue or red conspicuously on the sleeve, marked "N. Y."[7] There was a market-house on Pearl street, between Wall street and Exchange Place, while the Custom House of that day was on the same street, between Broad and Whitehall streets.[8]

The little town was advancing in the matter of street improvements. The residents on Broadway had been given leave in 1708 to plant trees in front of their premises,[9] giving the street a pleasant aspect, especially in summer. The property-owners on the principal streets were required to pave the streets with cobblestones for a distance of

1 "Historical Account of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel," by David Humphreys (London, 1730), p. 238.
2 Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 341.
3 Humphreys, as cited, p. 238.
4 Valentine's Manual, 1858, p. 566.
5 Valentine's Manual, 1862, pp. 539, 553.
6 Ib., 1858, pp. 565, 567.
7 Ib., 1862, p. 658.
8 Ib., 1850, pp. 443, 446.
9 Ib., 1850, p. 446.

ten feet from their line, leaving the middle unpaved.[1] The population was increasing steadily. In 1712 it had been 5840; in 1723 it was 7248; and in 1731, 8622.[2] Property-owners began to develop their lands, to meet the increasing demand for building-lots. About 1720 Trinity Church began to lay out the south part of the "King's Farm" into lots.[3] The block bounded by Whitehall, Pearl, Moore, and Water streets had been used for many years as an open market-place where the country wagons stood, and the vacant space in front of the fort was used as a public parade and for meetings, bonfires, and other public demonstrations. Stephen Richards, Jacob Leisler, Obadiah Hunt, Benjamin Wynkoop, Robert Crook, Thomas Roberts, Paul Richard, and Isaac De Peyster, Sr., living near the south-east bastion of the fort, presented a petition to the governor and council, June 15, 1724, setting forth that the old market-house had fallen down and that the dock adjoining had become filled up by the rubbish of the city, and that the magistrates of the city proposed to lease the ground in building-lots for the term of forty-one years, which the petitioners claimed would be greatly to their injury, and that the buildings would obstruct the range of the cannon in the fort. Dr. Colden, as surveyor-general, sustained the correctness of this latter objection, and the council stopped the proposed improvement.[4] In 1732 the old market-place was leased to some public-spirited citizens, who laid it out and inclosed it for a bowling green.[5] In 1722 the first steps were taken toward extending the shore-line of the Hudson River front out to deep water, but the property-owners were indifferent, and it was several years before the present Greenwich and Washington streets were laid out. There were more signs of improvement on the East River front. On January 18, 1722, the council received a petition from Garrit Van Horn, John Read, Thomas Bayeux, Stephen Richards, Thomas Clarke, Rip Van Dam, Jr., Henry Cuyler, and Peter Breasted, asking for letters patent to extend the wharves upon the shore of the East River from Rip Van Dam's corner at the lower end of Maiden Lane to the corner of Thomas Clarke. The mayor, Robert Walters, in behalf of the city, objected, but the council, after several hearings, granted the petition and ordered that a street forty-five feet wide be laid out on the shore-front, to be called Burnet's street (now Water street, between Wall and

PROVOOST ARMS.

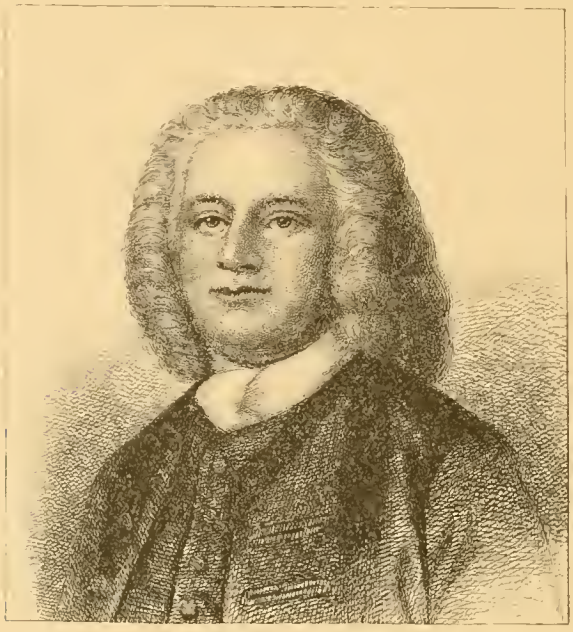
[1] Valentine's Manual, 1862, p. 533.
[2] Ib., 1851, p. 352.
[3] Valentine's "History of New-York," p. 286.
[4] Council Minutes, 14: 306, 325; Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 488; Valentine's Manual, 1862, 511-12.
[5] Valentine's Hist. N. Y., p. 286.

John), and that the new dock be called Burnet's key.[1] The development of the town is also indicated by the numerous sales of real estate. In 1719 the Presbyterians bought a plot 88×124 feet on Wall street, near Broadway, for which they paid Abraham De Peyster and Nicholas Bayard £350. In 1720, a lot on the northeast corner of Maiden Lane and William street, twenty-five feet on William street and forty-five feet on Maiden Lane, sold for $193; two houses and lots on the northwest corner of Broad and Stone streets, fronting on Broad street, 51½ feet front, 42 feet deep, $1250. In 1721, house and lot in Wall street, 32×150 feet, $850; two lots on Broadway, 50×160 feet, $293. In 1722, lot on the present Rose street, 25×100 feet, $25. In 1723, two lots on the north side of Beekman street, north of William street, $125; lot on Beekman street, next to the corner of Gold street, 23×100 feet, $80; lot on the southeast corner of Beekman and Cliff streets, 25×75 feet, $125. In 1725, four lots on the northwest corner of Frankfort and Vandewater streets, one hundred and forty feet on Frankfort street and one hundred feet on Vandewater (then Duke) street, $150. In 1726 the Dutch church paid £575 for the plot on Nassau street, whereon they built their new church.[2] A lot on the north side of John street, 25×100 feet, sold for $200; a lot on the east side of Broadway, 24×161 feet, $97; and a house and lot on the west side of Broadway, 70×50 feet, $1100. In 1727 two lots on Spruce street and two on Gold street, $225; a lot on the north side of Maiden Lane, 25×147 feet, $250; and a lot on John street, 35×100 feet, $125.

The commerce of the port grew slowly but steadily, about 215 to 225 vessels clearing out yearly. From 1717 to 1720 the imports averaged £21,254 yearly, and the exports £52,239. From 1720 to 1723 the imports remained the same, while the exports increased an average of £2300 yearly; from 1723 to 1727 the imports averaged £27,480 per annum, and the exports £73,000.[3] One obstacle to the growth of commerce was the frequency with which merchant vessels were captured on the high seas by bloodthirsty pirates, who cruised offshore, and often had the temerity to sail up to the very port of New-York. The newspapers of the day are full of reports of encounters with these daring sea-robbers. For example: the crew of one vessel arriving in New-York in 1723 told how they had been boarded by pirates, who plundered the vessel, "cut and whipped some of the men, and others they burnt with Matches between the Fingers to the bone to make them confess where their Money was, they took to the value of a Thousand Pistoles from Passengers and others, they then let them

1 Council Minutes, XIII: 2–116. 2 Now occupied by the Mutual Life Insurance Company. The new church was built in 1729. 3 Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 618, 761, 897.

go." "The Pyrates gave us an account of his taking the Bay of Hondoras from the Spaniards, which had surprised the English and taking them, and putting all the Spaniards to the Sword Excepting two Boys, as also burning The King George, and a Snow belonging to New York, and sunk one of the New England Ships, and cut off one of the Masters Ears and slit his Nose, all this they confessed themselves, they are now supposed to be cruising off of Sandy Hook or thereabouts."[1]



Wm Smith

Sometimes vessels arriving in the port brought an enemy on board, as was the case of the brigantine Hopewell, from Madeira, which arrived in port on the night of May 25, 1725, with a number of people afflicted with smallpox, of which one person had died. It appeared that Henry Fuller, the mate, who was ill with the disease, had come ashore, and the high sheriff was ordered "to go to one Goelets, a Painter, in Maiden Lane, and there to search for the said Henry Fuller and to Convey him on Board the said Brigantine." The sheriff found difficulty in executing the warrant, owing to the natural timidity of his constables about exposing themselves to infection, so the council desired Colonel Riggs, the commander at the fort, to send four of his best men to assist in removing Fuller. Messrs. B. Rynders, John Van Horne, and Stephen De Lancey, owners of the Hopewell, asked that the crew and their bedding might be put on Bedlow's Island, but the council concluded that the vessel should anchor in the channel between Bedlow's Island and Buckett Island, at the same time prescribing a code of signals for communication between the vessel and the shore in cases of necessity, until the brigantine should be free from infection. The ferrymen on each side of the Narrows and all the pilots belonging to the port were directed to acquaint all

[1] "American Weekly Mercury" (Philadelphia), June 6, 1723.

incoming vessels that the Hopewell was "performing quarantine" at Bedlow's Island.[1]

The jurisdiction of the governor and council was exercised over a curious range of subjects. September 30, 1720, Henry Smith was given a commission to seize all drift whales on the coast of Suffolk County.[2] December 7, 1720, Mary Barnet, of Staten Island, widow, petitioned for leave to ask and receive voluntary assistance from the benevolent, her house having been burned;[3] and on the 23d of the same month Edmund Hawkings, mariner, petitioned "for a brief to obtain relief from the charitable, he having lost his sloop by fire off Whitestone, Long Island."[4] The Presbyterians, having secured a site for a church, petitioned, September 19, 1720, for incorporation, but were refused, for lack of a precedent.[5] May 17, 1721, a license was granted to James Cooper & Company to take whales, they paying one twentieth of the oil and whalebone.[6] To encourage various enterprises, monopolies were frequently granted. In 1720 the Legislature passed an act granting to Robert Lettice Hooper and his assigns a monopoly for refining sugar. In 1725 Hooper styled himself "sugar refiner," but having failed to live up to the terms of his privilege, an act was passed in November, 1727, repealing his monopoly.[7] In 1724 an act was passed giving to Susannah Parmyter, widow, and her assigns, the exclusive right of making lamp-black for ten years.[8] William Bradford, the printer, asked for a like monopoly for the manufacture of paper for fifteen years, but the powers that were had no great love for the newspaper press, and his petition was not granted.[9] In 1726 Lewis Hector Piot De Langloserie was by act of the legislature given the sole right to catch porpoises in the province of New-York.[10] The progress made toward reclaiming the wilderness adjacent to the city is indicated by the passage of an act in 1723 withdrawing the bounty previously offered for the capture of wild cats, although three years later it was deemed necessary to again offer bounties for the destruction of foxes and wild cats in Queens County. It was still customary to allow swine to run at large during the winter, picking up their subsistence in the woods, but by the year 1722 it was thought necessary to pass an act restricting this practice in the counties immediately around New-York, and in 1726 Saratoga received the same protection. In

[1] Council Minutes, 14, *et passim*: Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 492.

[2] Cal. N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 455.

[3] Ib., p. 457.

[4] Ib., pp. 457, 458.

[5] N. Y. Doc. Hist., 3: 278–281; Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 454.

[6] Cal. N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 460.

[7] Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2: 456, 491; Journal Legislative Council, 1: 461, 536, 557, 558, 562; Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 847. In 1730 Nicholas Bayard gave notice in the newspapers of the day that he had erected a refining-house for refining all sorts of sugar and sugar-candy, and had procured from Europe an experienced artist in that mystery. (N. Y. Gazette, Aug. 17, 1730.) This sugar-house stood back from Wall street, between Nassau and William, a high board fence along the street front securing it from intrusion.

[8] Journal Legislative Council, 1: 509, 518.

[9] Ib., p. 514.

[10] Ib., pp. 526, 536.

this latter year also an act was passed for the more effectual preservation and increase of deer on the Island Nassaw (Long Island).[1]

One smiles at the primitive simplicity of the City Fathers of those unsophisticated days, to read the financial statements of the chamberlain. He actually managed to keep the city's expenditures within its income. In 1721 the city's receipts were £559, of which only £215 was spent, leaving a balance of £344 in the treasury. In 1722 the receipts were £704, and expenditures £310, leaving a balance of £394; in 1723, the income was £721, and the outgo £575; in 1724, income £430, outgo £428, which was close sailing; in 1725, income £257, outgo £248; in 1726, income £288, outgo £224; in 1727, income £217, which was £30 more than the expenditures. A pound in New-York currency was reckoned at eighteen pence to the shilling, and so was equal to two-thirds of the pound sterling. In 1728 there was due the city £1384, and a bonded debt was undreamed of. One of the sources of income was the lease of the ferry to Brooklyn—the only ferry established then, the lessee being required to provide a house on each side, and boats for passengers and cattle. In 1717 two ferries were established, both running from what is now the foot of Fulton street on the Long Island side. In 1728 the privilege was leased for five years for two hundred and fifty-eight pounds yearly. The residents of the little Dutch village of Breuckelen, a mile back from the river, insisted upon their right to ferry themselves across, but New-York claimed the exclusive privilege, and the legislature frequently enacted strong measures to protect the city and its lessees.[2] The revenues of the province amounted to about four thousand pounds annually, raised principally by duties on rum, molasses, negroes, and Madeira wine, imported in foreign vessels. There was also a tonnage duty on vessels coming into port, and a small tax on salt and other necessaries. In 1726 the assembly wanted to remove the tonnage duty, on the ground that it drove commerce to New Jersey; they also wished to take off the duty on salt and molasses, which fell on the poor, and to impose a poll-tax on negroes, which the rich would chiefly have to pay. Governor Burnet was strongly in favor of a paper currency, and presented numerous and long arguments in its behalf, notwithstanding his unfortunate experience in the South Sea speculation. Indeed, he urged that the failure of that scheme was partly due to the neglect of the government to fix a maximum price for the stock. Another argument he adduced was that in New Jersey, where paper money was popular, the currency being based on real-estate loans, secured by a tax, the effect had been to send gold and silver out of the province to England.[3]

[1] "Journal Legislative Council," 1 : 486, 506, 517, 532, 550.

[2] Ib., pp. 536, 562, etc.

[3] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 551, 700, 736, 738, 769, 889–91; Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2 : 479; N. J. Archives, 5 : 76, 87, 153–8.

Governor Burnet found time amid his multifarious official duties to devote himself to his books—of which he was passionately fond—and to his researches in science and theology. "He was useful in promoting science, and by a quadrant of a large radius and well divided, by a good telescope of eighteen feet, and by a second pendulum of large vibrations, he made several good astronomical observations, towards ascertaining latitudes and longitudes."[1] He prepared a paper on the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites, which was published in 1724 in the "Transactions" of the Royal Astronomical Society, of which he was a member.[2] But his great hobby was the study of divinity and of the Bible, and when he got a listener he was loath to let him go. He said that Sir Isaac Newton had taught him that the prophets had a language peculiar to themselves, which once learned, the prophecies could be as readily understood as other writings.[3] Whether or not he applied this method, or whether he rightly understood his famous preceptor, cannot be told, but he spent two years or more in writing an exposition of that stumbling-block of expositors—the twelfth chapter of Daniel, publishing the results in 1724, anonymously. Having in this book proved to his own satisfaction that the first period referred to by Daniel occurred in 1715, he easily showed that the second would happen in 1745, and the third in 1790. While engaged on this work he conceived the idea of going over to France to persuade the leading men in that country to destroy the Papacy—a whimsical notion which greatly alarmed his wiser brother Gilbert in England.[4] Dr. Colden says he was a zealous Christian, but not in all points orthodox, for he "often declared that many orthodox men were knaves, while he had never known a heretick that was not an honest man."[5] As the censorious Dr. Thomas Bradbury Chandler puts it, "his eccentrical genius was not to be confined within the limits of orthodoxy."[6] He was the terror of young preachers, for, no matter even if they had been licensed by the Bishop of London, the governor would give them a text and a Bible, and shut them up in a room for a certain time to prepare a sermon, and if it did not satisfy him they were not suffered to preach in his dominions.[7] Still, he was tolerant of all forms of

THE SLAVE-MARKET OF NEW-YORK.

1 Douglass's "Summary," 1 : 480.
2 Whitehead's "Perth Amboy," p. 165.
3 Cadwallader Colden, in N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, pp. 214, 215.
4 Whitehead's "Perth Amboy," pp. 162, 163.
5 N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, 215.
6 Chandler's "Life of Johnson" (London, 1824), p. 41.
7 Whitehead's "Perth Amboy," p. 162.

religion. When Nicholas Eyers, brewer, set forth in his petition in January, 1722, that his hired house in Broad street had been registered as "an anabaptist meeting house" since the first Tuesday in February, 1715; that he had been a public preacher to a Baptist congregation in the city for at least four years; that he had just hired a house from Rip Van Dam for a public meeting-house, and that he desired a license as a preacher, the governor readily granted it.[1] He cared little for the external forms of religion. While on his way to Boston, when transferred to that government, he complained of the long graces of the clergymen on the road, and asked Colonel Tyler when they would shorten, who replied: "The graces will increase in length until you come to Boston; after that, they will shorten till you come to your government of New Hampshire, where your Excellency will find no grace at all."[2] One day, when about to sit down to dinner with an "old charter" senator of Massachusetts, who retained the custom of saying grace sitting, his host asked him which way he preferred, to which the hungry governor impatiently replied: "Standing or sitting, any way or no way, just as you please."[3]

Another trait of the governor's character was his fondness for exercising the office of chancellor. The historian Smith says he "made a tolerable figure in the exercise of it, tho' he was no lawyer, and had a foible very unsuitable for a judge, I mean his resolving too speedily, for he used to say of himself, 'I act first, and think afterwards'";[4] or, as he put it on another occasion: "I am inclined to believe as I wish."[5] Two cases which came before him as chancellor were partly instrumental in causing his removal. The French congregation, "L'Église du Saint Esprit,"[6] worshiped in a stone building fifty by seventy-seven feet, erected in 1704, in Pine street. The congregation was large and flourishing; the Rev. Louis Rou was called to the pastorate about 1710, and as the church increased the Rev. J. J. Moulinars was called as his colleague. In the fall of 1724 the consistory of the church dismissed Mr. Rou, in the interest of Mr. Moulinars. Mr. Rou and a large number of the church members protested, and brought the matter before the council, who, after a hearing, decided that the dismissal was irregular and unlawful, but advised the congregation to adjust their differences amicably. As the consistory refused to reinstate Mr. Rou, he filed a bill in chancery to compel them to produce their contract with him; the consistory pleaded to the jurisdiction of the court, which plea the governor overruled. As Rou, a scholarly

[1] "New-York Documentary History" (4to ed.), 3: 290, 291. Benedict, in "History of the Baptists" (Boston, 1813), 1: 537, is in error in saying that Burnet witnessed the baptism of Eyers in 1714; Governor Hunter is meant.

[2] Belknap's "New Hampshire," 3: 75.

[3] Hutchinson's "Massachusetts," 2: 32.

[4] Smith's "New-York," p. 201.

[5] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 703.

[6] For illustration of the church, see Chapter II. EDITOR.

man, was known to be on intimate terms with Burnet, and as the decision just given indicated what the final decree would be, the dissatisfied party dropped the suit, reinstated Mr. Rou, and left the church.[1] They were thereafter enemies of the governor. Among them was Stephen De Lancey, one of the most influential men in the province. The other suit was on a bill in chancery filed by Adolph Philipse, in relation to a suit at common law brought against him by the widow of one Codringtone, his former partner, on a bond for fifteen hundred pounds. The governor dismissed the bill, and left Mr. Philipse to make his defense at law as best he could.[2]

When the legislature met in September, 1725, Governor Burnet found that Adolph Philipse was elected speaker, and that Stephen De Lancey was one of the new members, of whom several had been chosen to fill vacancies. With a deplorable lack of judgment, Mr. Burnet allowed his resentment to take an unjustifiable turn, for when Mr. De Lancey presented himself to be sworn in, the governor questioned his citizenship, and declined to admit him until he had consulted Chief Justice Lewis Morris. On further reflection and consultation with friends, the governor perceived his error, and wrote to the assembly, saying that he left the matter entirely with them — where, indeed, it properly and exclusively belonged. Mr. De Lancey had been denizened in this province in 1686, and had sat in the council and in the assembly for nearly twenty years. It was the height of folly for the governor to raise a question as to his right to sit in the assembly now.[3] Thenceforth the whole De Lancey interest, thus twice antagonized by the governor, was bent on his removal. Although the assembly declared their readiness to meet all demands, they had their own ideas of what ought to be done. As a punishment for Chief Justice Morris, who was a member of the house, in advising against Mr. De Lancey's right to sit, they proposed to reduce his salary one hundred pounds, and to abolish the office of second judge, giving Morris more work,[4] and in other ways they manifested a disposition to break with the governor. After sitting five or six weeks they were adjourned till the ensuing spring. At this session the assembly persisted in making an appropriation for only three years, instead of for five, as formerly, and as the governor urged upon them: so he dissolved them, after an existence of eleven years.[5] The new assembly, which met on September 27, 1726, was not a whit more favorable to the administration; it promptly affirmed the views of its prede-

[1] N. Y. Doc. Hist. (4to ed.), 3 : 281–290 : Smith's New-York, pp. 222, 223 ; N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, pp. 207–9. Dr. Colden says that in the answer filed by the consistory they swore that they had no knowledge of such a contract, but they afterward admitted that they meant this to be understood of them as a body, for some of them had been members of the consistory when the contract was made, and knew all about it.

[2] N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, pp. 212, 213.

[3] Smith's New-York, pp. 223, 224 ; Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 769 : N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, pp. 210, 211.

[4] Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 769.

[5] Journal Legislative Council, 1 : 537.

cessor as to the sufficiency of the revenue and the propriety of reducing salaries—which the governor disregarded. However, they sustained his Indian policy, and authorized him to build a fort and lodge twenty soldiers in it at the mouth of the Onondaga River, and then he adjourned them until spring. He lost no time in taking advantage of the act just mentioned, but sent out workmen to build a stone fortress, with walls four feet thick, at Oswego, with sixty soldiers. There were already there about two hundred traders—so rapidly had the business grown under his wise management. The assembly voted three hundred pounds for the purpose, but he expended twice that sum out of his own pocket, so anxious was he to have his plan carried out.[1] In the summer of 1725 fifty-seven canoes went there, and returned with seven hundred and thirty-eight packs of beaver- and deer-skins. The French were alarmed, and erected a fort at Niagara, and at the same time demanded that the English abandon their fort at Oswego.[2]

On the accession of King George II., Burnet ordered the election of a new assembly, which met on September 30, 1727. It went through its business with little trouble, and adjourned on November 25, 1727, having sat less than half the time since the session opened. Everything moved along smoothly, and the acts passed were published with the usual solemnity on the last day of the session. Now his enemies sprung their mine. They knew that he was to be removed,[3] and, the business of the session being ended, the assembly adopted a series of scathing resolutions, denouncing the court of chancery as set up by the governor: that it rendered "the Libertys and properties of the Subjects extreamly Precarious, and that by the violent measures taken in & allowed by it some have been ruined, others obliged to abandon the Colony and many restrained in it either by Imprisonment or by excessive bail Exacted from them not to depart"; also that the court should not have been set up without the consent of the assembly, and that that body proposed at their next sitting to pass an act declaring all acts, decrees, and proceedings of the court null and void. It was five years since Burnet had caused Philipse to be removed from the council; it was two years since he had insulted De Lancey by questioning his citizenship;[4] it was two years, likewise, since he had dismissed Philipse's bill in chancery. Their turn had come at last, and the governor found himself in a hopeless minority. With unwise but not unreasonable indignation, he dissolved the assembly which had thus heaped contumely upon

[1] Journal Legislative Council, 1: 541, 554; Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 812, 813, 818, 879.

[2] Smith's New York, pp. 228, 229.

[3] Colonel John Montgomerie, the groom of the chambers to George II. while Prince of Wales, had been appointed governor on August 12, 1727. Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 823.

[4] De Lancey was a merchant, and interested in defeating the governor's Indian policy. N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, p. 220.

him in his person as chancellor.[1] Sensitive as he was, and having much self-complacency, this action of the assembly stung him to the quick, the more so that it was grossly unjust.

Moreover, this blow came at a time when he was suffering the severest domestic afflictions. On the morning of August 7, 1727, Mrs. Burnet presented him with a son;[2] but the joy of the household was soon changed to mourning, and mother and child were laid together in the chapel within the old fort. He made his will at this time, dated at New-York, September 6, 1727, in which he directs that his body "be buried at the Chapel of the Fort at New-York, near to my dearest wife Mary and one of my children, in a vault prepared for them, in case I die in the Province of New-York. But if I die elsewhere, in the nearest church or burying ground, or in the sea, if I should die there, well knowing that all places are alike to God's All-Seeing Eye."[3]

Writing home to the lords of trade, under date of August 26, he solicits their favor with the new king for his continuance in his governments of New-York and New Jersey, on the score of his faithful and efficient service. But his enemies were numerous and powerful, which made it easy for the king to consent readily to let his friend and former groom of the bed-chamber, John Montgomerie, have his wish when he

1 Journal Legislative Council, 1 : 562; N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, p. 212; Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5 : 847, 848.

2 Calendar N. Y. Hist. MSS., 2 : 487.

3 N. Y. Genealogical and Biographical Record, 6 : 6; Historical Magazine, April, 1865, p. 129. Mrs. Burnet's funeral sermon was preached in the chapel in the fort, by the Rev. Mr. Orum, whose MS. fails to give the date. (Hist. Mag., December, 1864, p. 398.) The will names "my children William, Thomas and Mary," by late wife "Mary Vanhorne," and appoints Abraham Van Horne and Mary Van Horne his wife Executors. The will was proved at Boston September 25, 1729, where Abraham Van Horne, his executor, filed the inventory of his estate on October 13, 1729, amounting to £4540 4s. 3½d. The daughter Mary married William Brown, of Beverly, Mass., and had issue William Burnet Brown, who settled in Virginia. In Abraham Van Horne's will, dated December 27, 1740, only two of the governor's children are named. (Ib., January, 1865, p. 34 : April, 1865, p. 129; N. Y. Gen. and Biog. Record, 6 : 6.) William Brown married, 2d, Mary, daughter of Philip French, of New Brunswick, N. J.; he died April 27, 1763. (Duer's "Life of Lord Stirling," p. 3, note.) Governor Jonathan Belcher, who succeeded Burnet in Massachusetts, tried to get the legislature to vote to his children the salary (at the rate of £1000) which they had withheld from the governor. Wynne, 1 : 153.

made choice of the government of New-York. Mr. Burnet felt a natural resentment at being thus removed, and his friends interceded with the queen in his behalf, but she replied with courtly politeness that the king thought it necessary to appoint a man of Governor Burnet's abilities to manage the troublesome people of Massachusetts, and as the king's service required the sacrifice, any loss resulting therefrom would be made good. So he reluctantly accepted the new position. He continued to attend to the duties of his office faithfully, promptly, and without a word of complaint, while he waited patiently for the arrival of his successor; and when Colonel Montgomerie landed at New-York on April 15, 1728, Governor Burnet tendered him the hospitalities of his mansion in the fort; and although his courtesy was not accepted, he does not appear to have shown any ill-will.[1] Soon after, he departed from New-York to assume his new government in Massachusetts. In doing so he was burdened with an instruction to insist upon the assembly of that province making an appropriation for at least five years for the support of the government;[2] this led to constant differences between him and that body, which were ended by his death at Boston, on September 7, 1729, caused by his taking cold from the overturning of his carriage upon the causeway at Cambridge, the tide being high and he falling into the water.[3] Burnet was but forty-one years old.

Said a writer in 1725: "Never a Country was happyer of a Governor than these Provinces are of him. He is Not only a Learned Man But one that has a peculiar Talent of Eloquence & good Humour Suitable to his Learning he is a Man of great generosity Supplying the necessitous and Distributing his Justice Equally to great and Small. He is one who has at heart the promoting the welfare of these provinces."[4] Says Smith: "We never had a Governor to whom the colony is so much indebted as to him. . . . The excessive love of money, a disease common to all his predecessors, and to some who succeeded him, was a vice from which he was entirely free. He sold no offices, nor attempted to raise a fortune by indirect means; for he lived generously, and carried scarce anything away with him, but his books. These and the conversation of men of letters were to him inexhaustible sources of delight."[5] The judicial Grahame speaks of him

1 Doc. rel. Col. Hist. N. Y., 5: 855, 856, 858, 870, 871; N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, pp. 219, 226.

2 N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, pp. 217–19.

3 Hutchinson's "Massachusetts," 2: 364. "He was conducted to the grave with the respectful solemnity of a public funeral, and with demonstrations of esteem creditable alike to the liberality of those who entertained this sentiment, and to the merit of the individual who inspired it." (Grahame's "United States," 3: 124.) The funeral sermon was preached in the King's Chapel, Boston, September 12, 1727, by the Rev. Mr. Price. (Hist. Mag., December, 1864, p. 398.) In accordance with the directions in his will, his son Gilbert ("a lively youth about fifteen"), by his first wife, was sent from Boston to his aunt Mary, wife of David Mitchell, in England. It was said that he was well provided for by Bishop Burnet's will. The other children were brought from Boston to New-York by their grandfather, Abraham Van Horne. N. J. Archives, 5: 261; N. Y. Gen. and Biog. Record, 6: 6.

4 N. J. Archives, 5: 100.

5 Smith's "New-York," p. 231.

thus: "He labored with equal wisdom and assiduity to promote the welfare of the province, and cultivated the favor of the people with a success which only the clamors and intrigues of an interested faction prevented from being as entire and immediate as it proved lasting and honorable. Though in the close of his administration his popularity was eclipsed by the artifices of those who opposed his views, the testimony that farther experience afforded to the tendency of these views to promote the general good gained him a time-honored name, and a reputation coequal with his deserts; and more than twenty years after his death, the Swedish philosopher, Kalm, during his travels in America, heard Burnet's worth commemorated with grateful praise by his people, who lamented him as the best governor they had ever obeyed."[1] Writing thirty years after his death, Dr. Colden says of him: "He studied the true interest of the province more than any before him or any since. No instance can be given of oppression in any shape. No man was more free from Avarice. He was generous to a degree so far that if he erred it was in not takeing sufficient care of his private interest. He expended yearly considerable sums in private charitie, which he managed so that none knew of them more than what could not be avoided and thereby in some degree doubled the charitie to many who received it."[2] James Alexander was greatly overcome by the intelligence of the governor's death. "The death of Mr. Burnet," he writes to ex-Governor Hunter, "gave me the greatest grief & concern of anything I have met with, the world Loses therby one of the best of men, & I in particular a most Sincere friend & one to whom I Lay under the greatest of Obligations he was a man who bating warmth was almost without a fault & that by degrees he became nearer & nearer Master of & in time had he lived would probably have been entirely so."[3] Reviewing his career, after the lapse of more than a century and a half, the impartial student of that period will, we think, accept as just these tributes of his contemporaries to the character of Governor William Burnet.

MAYORS OF NEW-YORK.

Robert Walters was mayor in 1720–1725. Early in life he came to New-York and engaged in mercantile pursuits. He was an Englishman by birth, and married a daughter of Jacob Leisler. At first the inheritance from her father was confiscated, but, being subsequently restored, it added materially to her husband's fortune. Besides the mayoralty Mr. Walters held several offices of distinction and trust in the province, as appears from the course of this history.

[1] Grahame's United States, 3: 96. [2] N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1868, p. 216. [3] N. J. Archives, 5: 271.

JOHANNES JANSEN was mayor in 1725. This name is again Dutch; and while numerous branches of this family changed its orthography to an English one, or adopted as patronymics distinguishing titles derived from residence or from some other circumstance, the mayor branch retained the ancient form. He was a merchant. His residence being in the South Ward, he represented this in the common council as alderman for nine years, from 1704 to 1706, and from 1713 to 1718. The population during his term had advanced to 7500 souls.

ROBERT LURTING was mayor for nine years, from 1726 to 1735. Commencing under Governor Burnet, his term extended through the whole of that of Montgomerie and to the last year of that of Cosby. He was the founder of that name in America, having been born in England, and having settled in New-York in early life, not far from the close of the seventeenth century. He married the widow of a rich merchant, Richard Jones, by which his fortune was largely increased. Beginning in a humble way with sloops and voyages on the Hudson and adjacent inland waters, he expanded his enterprises till they embraced foreign ports and required large merchant ships for the transporting of his merchandise. At the same time Mr. Lurting undertook various public duties. He was at this time a militia captain (but later rose to the rank of colonel); and put his mercantile training to good military use as a commissioner for the commissary department in the fruitless Canadian campaign of 1709–1710. He served at different periods as assistant alderman and alderman for the South Ward, the Dock Ward, and the East Ward respectively, indicating several changes of residence. He was vendue-master for many years, his function giving him supervision over auctions. It was during his term, as will be noticed at some length in the succeeding chapter, that occurred the important event of the granting of the Montgomerie charter in 1731. He died while in office, in July, 1735, after a prolonged illness. The city had now reached 8000 inhabitants.

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